

REMARKS

Claims 3-5, 9-11, and 15-17 have been amended. Claims 1, 7, and 13 have been canceled. New claims 19-27 have been added. Thus, claims 3-6, 9-12, and 15-27 are pending.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9-13, and 15-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roy (U.S. Patent No. 6,496,859) and Owa (U.S. Patent No. 6,348,971). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 19 recites, *inter alia*, "an integrated profile creating unit which integrates the profiles of said devices so as to create an integrated profile, said integrated profile being a profile of an ideal virtual device having every function of said devices." Claims 22 and 25 recite, *inter alia*, "integrating said plurality of profiles to created an integrated profile; wherein said integrated profile is a profile of an ideal virtual device having every function of said devices."

Roy discloses a system and method for locating devices over a network. Roy's system and method are designed for use on a network where UDP packet loss can prevent an exhaustive and reliable search of a network and where some devices of a network may not have an IP address. See column 1, lines 54-56; column 2, lines 1-4. Roy discloses using a discovery task which sends discovery requests over a computer network. As noted in the Office Action, as network devices respond to the discovery request, information is extracted from each response and inserted into a data structure. The information extracted from each response is information relating to the responding device, and is referred to as a profile for that device. The data structure which includes the collection of profiles from each responding device is known as the integrated profile. The Office Action is correct in noting that Roy fails to disclose or suggest selecting a device from the plurality of discovered devices.

Owa discloses a system and method for selecting a printer. Owa discloses a system and method for selecting a printer. Owa discloses a system which includes a database of only basic information regarding all local and network printers. Column 3, lines 52-56. When printing, a user of the Owa system selects certain specific characteristics from the set of basic information maintained by the system and the system selects one or more printers for use based on a search of the database for matching printers.

Thus, neither Roy nor Owa discloses or suggest, whether singly or in combination, a system or method which utilizes an “an integrated profile creating unit which integrates the profiles of said devices so as to create an integrated profile, said integrated profile being a profile of an ideal virtual device having every function of said devices” (emphasis supplied) as required by claim 19 or an “integrating said plurality of profiles to created an integrated profile; wherein said integrated profile is a profile of an ideal virtual device having every function of said devices” (emphasis supplied) as required by claim 22 and 25.

Further, dependent claim 21 recites “a table creating unit which creates a table related to a priority order of said devices, the priority order in which said devices are preferably used” while depending claims 24 and 27 recite “creating a table, the table specifying a preferred priority for use of the devices.” Owa discloses at column 7, lines 6-11:

If several printers gain the same highest score, one of them is selected as an optimum printer based on a proper criterion, such as the printer name order, ascending order of the number of printer operation times, identification number order, or preset priority.

Column 7, lines 6-11.

Owa therefore discloses that if several devices achieve the highest score, alternate additional factors can be used to determine which one of the several devices is selected. Owa, however, fails to teach or suggest a table which specifies a preferred priority for use of devices, as required by the above quoted language from claims 21, 24, and 27.

Accordingly, independent claims 19, 22, and 25, and claims 21, 24, and 27 are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record for the above stated reasons. The remaining claims, i.e., claims 3-6, 9-12, 15-18, 20, 23, and 26 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reason as their respective independent claims.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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